

November 2003

1. 9

Narrative

Benchmarks

In narrative writing, students organize and relate a series of events, fictional or actual, in a coherent whole. This is evident when students:

5-8:

- A. Recount in sequence several parts of an experience or event, commenting on their significance and drawing a conclusion from them; or create an imaginative story with a clear story line in which some events are clearly related to the resolution of a problem.
- B. Use dialogue and/or other strategies appropriate to narration; and
- C. Select details consistent with the intent of the story, omitting extraneous details.

9-12: Evidence 5 – 8 applies, plus -

- D. Establish a situation/plot, point of view, setting, and conflict;
 - E. Develop characters through action, speech, relationship to others, etc.; and
 - F. Use a range of narrative strategies.
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8th Grade Benchmarks

“Plenty”	5 / 3
“Carrying Timothy Away”	5 / 3
“Lollipop”	4 / 2
“My Crazy Cat”	3 / 3
“The Christmas Tree Accident”	3 / 2
“The Accident”	2 / 2
“The Dream”	2 / 3
“My Life Story”	1 / 1

VERMONT NEW STANDARDS RUBRIC FOR NARRATIVE WRITING: WRITING TO TELL A STORY

Standard 1.9 In written narratives, students organize and relate a series of events, fictional or actual, in a coherent whole.

Criteria	Score Point 5 Exceeds the Standards	Score Point 4 Accomplished Writing	Score Point 3 Intermediate Writing	Score Point 2 Basic Writing	Score Point 1 Limited Writing	
CONTEXT, PURPOSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes situation, point of view, conflict, and plot, as necessary 	<p>Score point 5 meets all the criteria in score point 4. In addition, a paper receiving this score renders a particularly dramatic recreation of events.</p> <p>Shows insight into the characters' motivation and the significance of the events (purpose).</p> <p>Uses lively and concrete language; e.g., similes and metaphors (detail/voice & tone).</p> <p>Some language and images may invite readers to reflect on the significance of the events (voice & tone).</p> <p>Reveals a strong individual voice.</p> <p>Uses a variety of sentence structures and length purposefully (voice & tone).</p>	<p>Establishes the situation by setting the action of the story within a clearly defined time and place (purpose).</p> <p>Presents main characters effectively.</p> <p>Maintains clear topic and focus (purpose).</p> <p>Narrator may reflect on the importance of events (purpose).</p>	<p>Establishes adequate context.</p> <p>Presents characters in a somewhat stereotypical fashion.</p> <p>Relies on a narrow range of strategies to develop story line.</p>	<p>May give vague sense of context (purpose).</p> <p>Identifies characters.</p> <p>Establishes story topic; attempts focus (purpose).</p>	<p>Little or no context presented (purpose).</p> <p>May list characters.</p> <p>Presents topic; no focus.</p>	Score Point 0 Unscorable There is no evidence of an attempt to write a narrative piece.
NARRATIVE STRATEGIES: VOICE /TONE AND ELABORATION (Details) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing the character in action Using dialogue to reveal character and advance action Dramatizing scenes Managing time through straightforward chronology, flashbacks, episodes and transition, or foreshadowing Providing character motivation Developing suspense 		<p>Creates a believable world, real or fictional, developing action by dramatizing rather than telling what happens (detail).</p> <p>Develops characters through effective use of dialogue, action, behavior, or relationships with other characters (detail).</p> <p>Shows character growth or change or comments on significance of experience.</p> <p>Relevant, concrete details enable readers to imagine the world of the story or experience.</p>	<p>Some strategies, such as dialogue, used with effectiveness (detail).</p> <p>Some details may be generic, but they advance action and describe characters' personalities and actions.</p> <p>Generally uses predictable language (voice & tone).</p> <p>May vary sentence length and type (voice & tone).</p>	<p>May use some dialogue (detail).</p> <p>May have problems with pacing.</p> <p>May list rather than develop relevant detail or character traits. Characters are often stereotypes, lacking motivation (detail).</p> <p>Some inappropriate word choices (voice & tone).</p> <p>Little variety of sentence structure or length (voice & tone).</p>	<p>May list some generic details in haphazard order.</p> <p>May not describe characters (detail).</p> <p>Little attention to word choice (voice & tone).</p> <p>Usually short, simple sentences (voice & tone).</p>	
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE		<p>Organized in a dramatic /effective way.</p> <p>Has an engaging beginning and moves through a series of events to a logical, satisfying ending (organization).</p>	<p>Presents characters and events in such a way that readers can easily follow the story line (organization).</p> <p>Has a clear beginning, middle, and end.</p> <p>Ending may rely on external events rather than on characters' decisions or actions.</p>	<p>Relies on straightforward "and then" chronology (organization).</p> <p>May lack effective beginning and/or ending or have an abrupt conclusion (organization).</p> <p>May present characters and the sequence of events in a predictable way (organization).</p>	<p>May have major gaps in coherence.</p>	

This rubric is adapted from materials created by the New Standards Project.

NARRATIVES

Narratives: Standard 1.9 In written narratives, students organize and relate a series of events, fictional or actual, in a coherent whole. This is evident when students: (PreK-4) **a.** Recount in sequence several parts of an experience or event, commenting on their significance and drawing a conclusion from them; or create an imaginative story with a clear story line in which some events are clearly related to the resolution of a problem; **b.** Use dialogue and/or other strategies appropriate to narration; **c.** Select details consistent with the intent of the story, omitting extraneous details; (5-8) **d.** Establish a situation/plot, point of view, setting and conflict; **e.** Develop characters through action, speech, relationships to others, etc; **f.** Use a range of narrative strategies; (9 – 12) **g.** Engage readers by creating a context that makes clear the significance of the story and of its central idea or tension; **h.** Control both movement (chronology) and the pace of the story; **i.** Effectively use a range of narrative strategies; **j.** Effectively use dialogue; and **k.** Unify all narrative aspects of the story.

NARRATIVES – Writing that tells a story or recounts an event.

GLOSSARY

Coherence – The arrangement of ideas in such a way that the reader can easily move from one point to another. When all ideas are arranged and connected, a piece of writing has coherence.

Context -The set of facts or circumstances surrounding an event or a situation in a piece of literature.

Elaboration – The words used to describe, persuade, explain, or in some way support the main idea; to be effective details should be vivid, colorful, and appeal to the senses. Details can be descriptive, sensory, and/or reflective.

Focus – The concentration on a specific topic to give it emphasis or clarity.

Pacing – The rate of movement and action of the story. The story may take a long time to build to the climax or end abruptly.

Stereotype – A pattern or form that does not change. A character is “stereotyped” if she or he has no individuality and fits a mold.

Tone – The overall feeling or effect created by a writer’s attitude and use of words. This feeling may be serious, mock-serious, humorous, sarcastic, solemn, objective, etc.

Topic – The specific subject covered in a piece of writing.

Voice – The style and quality of the writing. Voice portrays the author’s personality or the personality of a chosen persona. A distinctive voice establishes personal expression and enhances the writing.

HINTS – A narrative piece usually focuses on the experience and occasion, plot, setting, characters, problem solving, and resolution. However, in 8th grade and above, a narrative may have, and is usually more effective with, some reflection.

Plenty

A man walks into a convenience store, rubbing his hands and stamping his feet from the cold. Behind him trails the noise of cold autumn winds and the humming and honking of the busy streets outside. His hair and beard are long and unkept, almost entirely gray, with intruding flecks of white and brown. He walks over to one side and forces his shaking, knotted hands to pour some coffee into a small styrofoam cup. He goes to the counter, reaches into his worn, stained winter coat and slowly and carefully counts out nickels and dimes, regretfully placing them in the counter.

Before he leaves, a boy of about fourteen and his mother walk in. As the mother gets a cup of coffee, she says, “Just pick out one or two.” The boy grabs three donuts and looks at her with mockingly pleading eyes. “Once you touch it, you buy it,” she says.

“Cool,” he says, and takes the donuts to the counter.

The mother walks over and gives the cashier a five dollar bill. “Is this enough?” she asks.

“Plenty,” the cashier replies.

With a smile, mother and son leave the store to continue in their own world. The old man watches them go with weary, broken-glass eyes, and repeats, “Plenty.” Then he too goes off to his world, huddled around his cup of coffee.

Plenty

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Context is clear; figurative language establishes setting and character

Before he leaves, a boy of about fourteen and his mother walk in. As the mother gets a cup of coffee, she says, “Just pick out one or two.” The boy grabs three donuts and looks at her with mockingly pleading eyes. “Once you touch it, you buy it,” she says.

Stereotyped characters add to the drama

“Cool,” he says, and takes the donuts to the counter.

The mother walks over and gives the cashier a five dollar bill. “Is this enough?” she asks.

“Plenty,” the cashier replies.

Dialogue and action used to show, rather than tell, relationship of characters

With a smile, mother and son leave the store to continue in their own world. The old man watches them go with weary, broken-glass eyes, and repeats, “Plenty.” Then he too goes off to his world, huddled around his cup of coffee.

Contrast between characters and repetition of the word “Plenty” establishes ironic theme

Score Point 5

This “exploded moment” narrative has a clear conflict and an insightful theme. The writer creates a believable world with precise, descriptive language and effectively dramatizes the situation with dialogue and action. The contrast between the man and the mother and son is seen even in the language used to describe each. The cup of coffee serves as an ironic metaphor for this contrast. Thus, the “language and images invite the reader to reflect on the significance of the event.”

Conventions—Score Point 3

The writing shows control of grade-level conventions.

Carrying Timothy Away

The room was black. All except for the two faces shown in the bright orange glow from the fireplace. Margaret and her brother sat back to back in front of the roaring fire.

“Don’t push me”, said Margaret.

“I’m not”, said her brother Timothy. The two nudged each other and then proceeded to laugh.

This was the first time all day that they had enough time to sit down and relax. The silence that surrounded them was music to their ears. It sure beat working in the field and studying all day.

Yet, soon the beautiful silence was broken by the sudden loud knocking on the door. Margaret and Timothy’s mother, Ann, shuffled through the living room, mumbling to herself. She opened the door and stepped back a little. A man appeared in the doorway. He was wearing gray pants, black shiny boots, a dark blue jacket with shiny brass buttons. He looked like a man of high rank and importance.

“Good evening, Ma’am. My name is Col. Ralph Chandler. As you probably know, a battle will be taking place up north tomorrow.”

“Why would I know? I have no link to armies and such. What do you want?”

“Ma’am, I’m going to get straight to the point. We need men, lots of them. We thought we would have enough, but we felt that it would be smart to gather together as many men as possible. I heard that you have a son of nineteen years.”

“How did you hear, sir?”

“Ma’am, that is of little importance. Now, I would greatly appreciate it if you would inform me of your son’s age.”

“He is nineteen,” she answered timidly.

“Then since he is of age, would he be willing to fight?”

Ann gasped. “Do you mean, send my son off to war?”

“Why, yes Ma’am.”

Ann burst into tears. “How can you just march into my house and claim that my son should go to war?”

“It is his choice. Although, if he doesn’t go now, the war will catch up to him.”

A knot was forming in Timothy’s stomach.

“Is this a threat?” asked Ann.

“No Ma’am, only the fact. If he does decide that he would like to fight tomorrow, he should meet us two miles from here at the bridge, at six o’clock.”

The burly man then turned and left the house, leaving a painful knot in everyone’s stomach.

Margaret immediately jumped up and sprang into her brother’s arms. “Don’t leave me, never, ever, ever, leave me!”

Strapping, young Timothy stared off into the empty darkness. He did not respond to his sister’s pleas.

Ann and Margaret both clung to Timothy and begged him not to go.

“It’s not right. War is not good and never leads to anything good. You know that Timothy. We’re Quakers, we have no reason to fight.”

Through his mother’s plead, Timothy remained blank faced and unemotional. Together they sat for many hours, hugging and crying. No words were spoken, or needed to be spoken. Timothy had already made up his mind. One by one, they each got up and

went to bed, still with no words. After Ann and Margaret were deep in their slumber, Timothy appeared at each of their bedsides. He kissed them each on their cheek, and went to bed.

As the sun woke up and crept into Margaret's room, Margaret awoke. She stretched her arms, and then legs, and then stepped out of bed. "Timothy, Timothy...where are my socks? Timothy!" she yelled. Suddenly, Margaret froze in her steps. "Oh god, is he gone?"

Margaret dashed into her brother's room. His bed was made as neatly as could be. The curtains were open and all of the books stacked neatly on the shelf. No Timothy could be seen.

Margaret hurried across the hall to her mother's room.

"Mother, mother, where's Timothy?" Margaret's mother was sitting on the window seat, staring blankly out the window. Margaret knelt down and wrapped her arms around her mother. She buried her face in her mother's cotton shirt. "Where is he, Mother?"

"He has left us for the war, my dear. There was no stopping him; he needed to go."

Enough was said. Mother and daughter stared out the window. They stared at the blue sky, the green grass, and the brown dirt. Everything seemed to be preordained. The grass was meant to be green, the sky was meant to be blue, the dirt was meant to be brown, the trees had no control over losing their leaves, the snow must fall, and the war had claimed Timothy.

Carrying Timothy Away

The room was black. All except for the two faces shown in the bright orange glow from the fireplace. Margaret and her brother sat back to back in front of the roaring fire.

Lack of specific setting enhances the universality of the theme

“Don’t push me”, said Margaret.

I’m not”, said her brother Timothy. The two nudged each other and then proceeded to laugh.

This was the first time all day that they had enough time to sit down and relax. The silence that surrounded them was music to their ears. It sure beat working in the field and studying all day.

Relationship of main characters shown effectively

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Conflict begins; concrete details foreshadow problem

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“How did you hear, sir?”

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“Then since he is of age, would he be willing to fight?”

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Authentic dialogue “shows” the action by dramatizing the conflict

“Why, yes Ma’am.”

Ann burst into tears. “How can you just march into my house and claim that my son should go to war?”

“It is his choice. Although, if he doesn’t go now, the war will catch up to him.”

↖ ↗ *Conflict deepens*

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Margaret immediately jumped up and sprang into her brother’s arms.

“Don’t leave me, never, ever, ever, leave me!”

Strapping, young Timothy stared off into the empty darkness. He did not respond to his sister’s pleas.

Timothy’s actions (inactions) create suspense

Ann and Margaret both clung to Timothy and begged him not to go.

“It’s not right. War is not good and never leads to anything good. You know that Timothy. We’re Quakers, we have no reason to fight.”

Character (mother’s) motivation

Through his mother’s plead, Timothy remained blank faced and unemotional. Together they sat for many hours, hugging and crying. No words were spoken, or needed to be spoken. Timothy had already made up his mind. One by one, they each got up and went to bed, still with no words. After Ann and Margaret were deep in their slumber, Timothy appeared at each of their bedsides. He kissed them each on their cheek, and went to bed.

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Again, dialogue shows action and creates suspense

Margaret dashed into her brother’s room. His bed was made as neatly as could be. The curtains were open and all of the books stacked neatly on the shelf. No Timothy could be seen.

Concrete details reveal Timothy’s decision

Margaret hurried across the hall to her mother’s room.

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Enough was said. Mother and daughter stared out the window. They stared at the blue sky, the green grass, and the brown dirt. Everything seemed to be preordained. The grass was meant to be green, the sky was meant to be blue, the dirt was meant to be brown, the trees had no control over losing their leaves, the snow must fall, and the war had claimed Timothy.

Repetition of concrete details and parallel language emphasize the importance of the events

Score Point 5

This narrative meets all the criteria for score point 4: it has an engaging beginning and moves through a series of events to a logical, satisfying ending. In addition, the language and images in the conclusion invite the reader to reflect on the inevitability of Timothy’s decision and the universal impact of war. The effective dialogue creates a particularly dramatic recreation of the events.

Conventions—Score Point 3

The writing shows control of grade-level conventions.

Lollipop

When I was younger I would always go to the grocery store with my mom. We always went to a big brick store called Kroger. I found it fascinating just strolling through the aisles, looking at the brightly packaged foods. There were many things I wanted but couldn't always have.

Most of the time I got what I wanted. But I remember one time as we paid for our food, I badly wanted a lollipop. I begged and begged my mom but for some reason every time I begged, her answer stayed as "no".

I let out a sigh and a moan. But then, I thought 'Well, if she won't buy me one, I will just take it.' I was young and didn't know that stealing was wrong. So, as my mom handed the cashier the money, and as he seemed preoccupied by handling it, I grabbed a grape blow pop- my favorite kind. I leisurely slipped it into my pink dress pocket.

As I passed the cashier on the way out, I flashed him a nasty, triumphant grin and thought, 'Heh, he didn't see me take this lollipop. I'm pretty good at this.' My mom didn't seem to notice my smile or the fact that I stole it.

We left the store and headed for the clinic. My mom was a blood doner and every once in a while she had to go to this office where they took blood. Of course, I usually went with her. As I walked, the lollipop in my pocket rubbed against my leg. It was pretty bulky. It stuck out far in my pocket and I was surprised that my mom didn't notice.

So, we entered the office that smelled of Vick's Vapor Rub. I had to wait in the waiting room while blood was being drawn.

I sat down in a green chair. I looked around and saw a machine that dispensed numbers. I thought I would just eat the lollipop right now. But, then if my mom saw she

would get suspicious. So, I waited, thirsty for the yummy taste of the grape flavored lollipop. The clock on the wall ticked away and it seemed as though with each tick the lollipop got closer to falling out of my pocket.

Just as I was about to pick it out of my pocket, my mom burst in saying, “ready to go.” I nodded my head and got up to leave.

As we were approaching the stairs outside, the lollipop started to fall out of my pocket. I reached out my hand as to not let it fall. I was too late. The grape flavored lollipop fell onto the hard wood floor.

As I looked up, pretending that the lollipop fell off the roof or something, I said, “.. ugh where did that come from.” My mom picked up the lollipop and knelt on her knees- one hand on my shoulder with a tight grip, the other holding the lollipop right in my face.

“Did you steal this from the grocery store”, my mom asked angrily.

“No. Honest. Allison gave it to me in school, today,” I said in a high, frightened tone.

“Then why did you want one so badly at the store if you already had one”, she said staring me right in the eyes. “Randy, did you steal this from the store,” she said emphasizing her words.

“Yes”, I said with my head bent down, “I did steal it- but please don’t make me return it to the store- I’ll be so embarrassed.”

“Fine, Randy I won’t make you return it but promise me that you won’t ever steal anything again.”

“Okay, mommy. I promise.”

On the car ride home, I was told a two hour long lecture on stealing. I think I fell asleep.

Lollipop

When I was younger I would always go to the grocery store with my mom. We always went to a big brick store called Kroger. I found it fascinating just strolling through the aisles, looking at the brightly packaged foods. There were many things I wanted but couldn't always have.

Clear context and character motivation

Most of the time I got what I wanted. But I remember one time as we paid for our food, I badly wanted a lollipop. I begged and begged my mom but for some reason every time I begged, her answer stayed as "no".

Focus/conflict

I let out a sigh and a moan. But then, I thought 'Well, if she won't buy me one, I will just take it.' I was young and didn't know that stealing was wrong. So, as my mom handed the cashier the money, and as he seemed preoccupied by handling it, I grabbed a grape blow pop- my favorite kind. I leisurely slipped it into my pink dress pocket.

Thoughtshot

Effective word choice

As I passed the cashier on the way out, I flashed him a nasty, triumphant grin and thought, 'Heh, he didn't see me take this lollipop. I'm pretty good at this.' My mom didn't seem to notice my smile or the fact that I stole it.

Thoughtshot reveals character's voice

We left the store and headed for the clinic. My mom was a blood doner and every once in a while she had to go to this office where they took blood. Of course, I usually went with her. As I walked, the lollipop in my pocket rubbed against my leg. It was pretty bulky. It stuck out far in my pocket and I was surprised that my mom didn't notice.

Concrete details support conflict/focus

So, we entered the office that smelled of Vick's Vapor Rub. I had to wait in the waiting room while blood was being drawn.

I sat down in a green chair. I looked around and saw a machine that dispensed numbers. I thought I would just eat the lollipop right now. But, then if my mom saw she would get suspicious. So, I waited, thirsty for the yummy taste of the grape flavored lollipop. The clock on the wall ticked away and it seemed as though with each tick the lollipop got closer to falling out of my pocket.

Effective elaboration of character's feelings

Just as I was about to pick it out of my pocket, my mom burst in saying,
“Ready to go.” I nodded my head and got up to leave.

As we were approaching the stairs out side, the lollipop started to fall out of my pocket. I reached out my hand as to not let it fall. I was too late. The grape flavored lollipop fell onto the hard wood floor.

Details create suspense

As I looked up, pretending that the lollipop fell off the roof or something, I said, „ugh where did that come from.” My mom picked up the lollipop and knelt on her knees- one hand on my shoulder with a tight grip, the other holding the lollipop right in my face.

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“No. Honest. Allison gave it to me in school, today,” I said in a high, frightened tone.

“Then why did you want one so badly at the store if you already had one”, she said staring me right in the eyes. “Randy, did you steal this from the store,” she said emphasizing her words.

Effective dialogue advances action

“Yes”, I said with my head bent down, “I did steal it- but please don’t make me return it to the store- I’ll be so embarrassed.”

“Fine, Randy I won’t make you return it but promise me that you won’t ever steal anything again.”

“Okay, mommy. I promise.”

On the car ride home, I was told a two hour long lecture on stealing. I think I fell asleep.

Character does not show growth, but ending is consistent with narrator’s actions throughout the narrative

Score Point 4

This narrative fulfills the criteria for score point 4. It has clear context, an effective main character/narrator, and a consistently maintained focus—the stealing of the lollipop. Concrete details create a believable world, and dialogue advances the action to a consistent and logical ending.

Conventions- Score Point 2

The writing demonstrates pervasive errors in several types of punctuation, with the second page having many more errors than the first.

My Crazy Cat

One spring weekday I awoke to the sound of laughter. When I was ready for the day, I went downstairs. It was then that I found the source of the noise. It was my parents and they were laughing at my cat, Good-for-nothing. She was stalking a four-point buck. She would pounce and the buck would angrily back away and start to paw the ground as if it was going to charge. Then, ignoring the body language of the buck, my cat pounced again! They kept this up until the buck got sick of being stalked, and then he charged my cat! When the buck stopped, my cat would stop running and turn to pounce again.

“Look at that crazy cat!” my dad said.

A few minutes later my mom said, “Oops, it’s late, time to leave!” Obviously, I was reluctant to go, but it was a school day.

We don’t know what happened after that, or for that matter what was on Good-for-nothing’s mind. Maybe she was thinking, “*What does this giant mouse think he’s doing here?*”

One thing we do know is that my cat is here. She usually brings her prey into the house. We never found the buck under the bed, was it because she couldn’t get it through the pet door? We’ll never know!

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Adequate context
Strong verbs show humorous action; missed opportunity for further elaboration

“Look at that crazy cat!” my dad said.

A few minutes later my mom said, “Oops, it’s late, time to leave!”

Dialogue used effectively

Obviously, I was reluctant to go, but it was a school day.

We don’t know what happened after that, or for that matter what was on Good-for-nothing’s mind. Maybe she was thinking, “What does this giant mouse think he’s doing here?” ← **Imagined thoughtshot of deer**

One thing we do know is that my cat is here. She usually brings her prey into the house. We never found the buck under the bed, was it because she couldn’t get it through the pet door? We’ll never know!

Humorous conclusion

Score Point 3

This humorous vignette has a clear beginning (without specific context), middle, and end, with strong verbs depicting the showdown between cat and deer. Further descriptive elaboration would have enhanced the piece.

Conventions – Score Point 3

The writing demonstrates control of grade-level conventions.

The Christmas Tree Accident

It was only the middle of December and the snow was about 2 feet deep and was still falling. It was a family tradition that our whole family went out to the mountains to get a Christmas tree. It was late Monday night about 3 or 4 o'clock when we went out to get a tree. I went ahead of all my other family members to get a good start on my tree hunt. I knew I wasn't too far ahead because I could hear my sister Sarah. After awhile Sarah caught up and helped me look for a tree. We found a tree hours later and it was starting to get dark. My sister wanted to wait till morning to cut it but I insisted on cutting it then and to drag it back. Well my mouth and actions got me into trouble. As I started sawing away at the trunk of the tree my sister started getting worried about me being under the tree because it was so big. Well I wasn't about to stop so I kept sawing until it was about an inch of being ready to fall over. I started to get up and the tree all of a sudden collapsed on me. I was blacked out for atleast half an hour when my sister came back with help. My granpa was standing over me looking and feeling for and dislocated bones or bumps. I heard him say that my leg was broken and out of place. I couldn't move my head because the strike of the tree put me in a deep freeze. It was atleast an hour when I was being uncovered by my pa who was bursting into tears praying for me to be alright. Well I did make it home but I had to go to the hospital to get my leg checked out. My leg was broken but I didn't care I wanted to get the tree. My granpa and pa were talking and thought that I might be able to get home to the tree standing nice and tall. I told my dad yes that I would like him to do that. Then I was home weeks later with my family on Christmas Eve.

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Clear context/ beginning

After awhile Sarah caught up and helped me look for a tree. We found a tree hours later and it was starting to get dark. My sister wanted to wait till morning to cut it but

Missed opportunity for dialogue

I insisted on cutting it then and to drag it back. Well my mouth and actions got me into trouble. As I started sawing away at the trunk of the tree my sister started getting

Stated focus

worried about me being under the tree because it was so big. Well I wasn't about to stop so I kept sawing until it was about an inch of being ready to fall over. I started to get up and the tree all of a sudden collapsed on me. I was blacked out for atleast

Elaboration lacking at a key point in the story

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was broken and out of place. I couldn't move my head because the strike of the tree

Missed opportunities for dialogue and elaboration

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who was bursting into tears praying for me to be alright. Well I did make it home but

I had to go to the hospital to get my leg checked out. My leg was broken but I didn't

care I wanted to get the tree. My granpa and pa were talking and thought that I might

be able to get home to the tree standing nice and tall. I told my dad yes that I would

like him to do that. Then I was home weeks later with my family on Christmas Eve.

Clear but ineffective ending

Score Point 3

This narrative has a focus, but the writer missed opportunities to "show" the action with elaboration, dialogue, and dramatic organization. The reader can easily follow the story line, but the characters are undeveloped. The language and action are generally predictable.

Conventions – Score Point 3

The writer shows inconsistent use of grade-level conventions in the areas of paragraphing and commas in complex sentence structures.

The Accident

“Come on, just a little farther.”

“Oh can we rest for a few minutes?”

“No, wait I see the opening. It won’t take any longer than five minutes. Can you make it?”

“I will try to make it, it does not look too steep or rough it can not be any worse than what we have already climbed.”

“Ok then let’s go!”

The two of them, Joe and Ralph kept on climbing up the side of the rocky mountain. They both could climb pretty well they were climbing a small mountain near their house. Finally they came to an opening in the side of the mountain.

It was a small, low opening in the rock the two of them lay flat on the ground, and one after another crawled into the opening.

“BOOM!, What was that?. Oh no! I can hear rocks falling and they sound big let’s get out of here,” yelled joe.

Joe went out first and just in time, the rocks fell and covered the opening.

“Oh no Ralph is in there!”

Joe climbed down to the bottom of the mountain. Luckily there was a police station about a quarter of a mile down the road.

Joe busted through the door of the station yelling.

“Help, my friend is stuck in one of the small caves in that mountain over there,” he said as he pointed to it, “can you get him out?”

Then Ralph walked in the door.

“Never mind,” Joe told the officer as they left.

“How did you get out?” Joe asked Ralph.

“I will never tell.”

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“I will never tell.”

Ineffective beginning

Vague sense of context for setting and characters

Few transitions; simple sentence structure

Contrived, listed details

Abrupt, meaningless conclusion

Score Point 2 / 2

This narrative merely identifies topic and characters. The organization is a straightforward listing of events with few transitions. Dialogue is static and stiff and events are convenient. The abrupt conclusion does not provide closure to the situation. The writing has multiple errors in sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization.

The Dream

It was a dark stormy night. I was running through the woods with my cousin. There was a crazy psycho chasing us. We got to the river and swam across. When we got to the other side we ran to the nearest store and called the police and told them that a crazy psycho was chasing us. They asked us what he looked like so we told them he was wearing all black and had white hair like lightning. The cops came and picked us up and brought us home. The next night I watched the news and they had caught the psycho. The police called and I went down and they said that I would receive a \$750.00 reward because this was a guy that they had been looking for and had a \$750.00 reward for anyone with any information leading to his capture.

Standard 1.9
Grade 8 Narrative
Score Point – 2 / 3

The Dream

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↖ ***Inappropriate word choice***

***Generic context;
identified characters;
“and then” chronology***

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***Abrupt, predictable
conclusion***

Score Point 2

This narrative is characterized by a skeletal list of predictable action with no point. The story line is coherent, but has no focus.

Conventions – Score Point 3

The writing demonstrates control of grade-level conventions.

My Life Story

When I was inside my mom's stomach. It took at least 3 weeks. To figure out I had hands with five fingers on each. Finally I was born at Smith Hospital on October 17, 1980 between 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. "Well. Here I am." "All, right I'm cold and want to be covered up." "So I guess I've gotta scream to get attention to be covered up." O.K. Now I'm being put in this thing that is square and has two rubber holes to tend to me. I think it is called an incubator. It helps little babies breath better. At least two hours have gone by and I'm being rushed to the Jones hospital because I'm dying. Why? Because my lungs were filled with human waste. I also needed more help than the Smith hospital could give me My mom for to hold me 2 seconds before the doctors rushed me in a helicopter to Jones. But, I use to have to go for check ups every three days until the check ups got better. And I would be able to breath more. Thanks to the Smith and Jones hospitals I'm still alive.

Misleading title; topic is birth

Standard 1.9
Grade 8 Narrative
Score Point – 1 / 1

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out I had hands with five fingers on each. Finally I was born at Smith Hospital on
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Gap in coherence

**Switch in verb tense
 causes confusion**

**Details are
 haphazard**

Score Point 1

This account of the author's birth contains major gaps in time coherence. Details are random, and the little dialogue serves no discernible purpose. The writing is limited.

Conventions – Score Point 1

The writing demonstrates minimal control of grade-level conventions. The errors in grammar, capitalization, sentence structure, and spelling interfere with meaning.